

Field surveys continued this week in Carteret, Linden, Rahway and Woodbridge to determine the extent of the infestation. More than 8,400 host trees have been climbed or examined for signs of the beetle. The main core of the infestation, with trees showing exit holes and egg sites, remains about 1 square mile in size with 403 known infested trees. A small number of infested trees have been found within the quarantine zone in an area approximately ½-mile from the core area. Survey crews are composed of observers from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA APHIS), the U.S. Forest Service and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection New Jersey Forest Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Federal Grain Inspection Service.

A major compliance issue occurred in the quarantine area. A contractor clearing trees at a construction site within the quarantine area was found to be removing wood debris, and shipped 20 loads of wood to a wood recycler in Middlesex County but outside the quarantine area. PPQ Officers stopped the current shipment, and carried out a preliminary assessment of the wood recycling facility. The contractor was put under a federal compliance agreement. Trees around the wood recycling facility will have to be surveyed for signs of ALB.

USDA APHIS PPQ Compliance Officers and program staff will be contacting construction code officials in the four towns in the quarantine area to see which firms have been issued similar permits in the past year to initiate an outreach effort to prevent unauthorized movement of wood and other regulated items. Over 220 regulatory contacts have been made with agencies and firms doing business in the quarantine area since the program in Middlesex and Union Counties began.

Members of the New Jersey and New York ALB teams will be featured on Ralph Snodsmith's syndicated radio show on WOR in New York on Sunday, September 26, from 8 to 10 a.m.